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IN THE CLAIMS

*The status of the claims as presently amended is as follows:*

1. *(Currently Amended)* An image forming apparatus capable of feeding tab sheets of a predetermined tab sheet bundle or other sheets than the tab sheets, comprising:

a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to an image transfer position via a first conveying path with the [[tab]] sheet being inverted;

a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without each sheet being inverted;

a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-up state;

a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-down state;

a designating device that designates a type of sequence of tabs of each of tab sheet bundles set in said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device; and

a determining device responsive to a user's instruction for feeding tab sheets and selection of a combination of one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device and one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device, for determining whether a combination of the selected one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device, the selected one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device, and the type of sequence of tabs of the tab sheet bundle set in the selected one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device is valid or not.

2. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a control device that controls, based on a result of the combination-validity determination by said determining device, whether to allow or inhibit image forming according to the user's selection of the combination of the one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device and the one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device.

3. *(Currently Amended)* An image forming apparatus capable of feeding tab sheets of a predetermined tab sheet bundle or other sheets than the tab sheets, comprising:

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a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to an image transfer position via a first conveying path with the [[tab]] sheet being inverted;

a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without each sheet being inverted;

a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-up state;

a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-down state;

a designating device that designates a type of sheets set in said first sheet feed device or said second sheet feed device, and when the designated type of sheets is a tab sheet bundle, designates a type of sequence of tabs of the tab sheet bundle; and

a determining device responsive to a user's instruction for feeding tab sheets and selection of a combination of one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device and one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device, for determining whether a combination of the selected one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device, the selected one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device, and the type of sequence of tabs of the tab sheet bundle set in the selected one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device is valid or not.

4. (*Original*) An image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 3, further comprising a control device that provides control to decide whether to allow or inhibit image forming according to the user's selection of the combination of the one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device and the one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device, based on a result of the combination-validity determination by said determining device.

5. (*Currently Amended*) An image forming apparatus capable of feeding tab sheets of a predetermined tab sheet bundle or other sheets than the tab sheets, comprising:

a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to an image transfer position via a first conveying path with the [[tab]] sheet being inverted;

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a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without each sheet being inverted;

a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-up state;

a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-down state;

a designating device that designates a type of sequence of tabs of each of tab sheet bundles set in said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device; and

a determining device responsive to a user's instruction for feeding tab sheets and selection of one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device, for determining which of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device is allowed to be selected by a user, according to the selected one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device and the type of sequence of tabs of the tab sheet bundle set in the selected one of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device.

6. (*Currently Amended*) An image forming apparatus capable of feeding tab sheets of a predetermined tab sheet bundle or other sheets than the tab sheets, comprising:

a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to an image transfer position via a first conveying path while each sheet is inverted;

a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without with the [[tab]] sheet being inverted;

a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-up state;

a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the predetermined tab sheet bundle of the predetermined tab sheet bundle or the other sheets in a face-down state;

a designating device that designates a type of sequence of tabs of each of tab sheet bundles set in said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device; and

a determining device responsive to a user's instruction for feeding tab sheets and selection of one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device, for

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determining which of said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device is allowed to be selected by a user, according to the selected one of said first sheet discharge device and said second sheet discharge device and the type of sequence of tabs of each of the tab sheet bundles set in said first sheet feed device and said second sheet feed device.

7. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus capable of sequentially feeding tab sheets of a tab sheet bundle in a normal order or a reverse order, comprising:

- a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to an image transfer position via a first conveying path while the tab sheet is inverted;

- a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without the tab sheet being inverted;

- a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-up state;

- a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-down state; and

- a control device responsive to selection of said first sheet discharge device, for inhibiting selection of feed devices other than said first sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the normal order is set and said second sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the reverse order is set.

8. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus capable of sequentially feeding tab sheets of a tab sheet bundle in a normal order or a reverse order, comprising:

- a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to an image transfer position via a first conveying path while the tab sheet is inverted;

- a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without the tab sheet being inverted;

- a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-up state;

- a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-down state; and

- a control device responsive to selection of said second sheet discharge device, for inhibiting selection of feed devices other than said first sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the reverse order is set and said second sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the normal order is set.

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9. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus capable of sequentially feeding tab sheets of a tab sheet bundle in a normal order or a reverse order, comprising:

a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to an image transfer position via a first conveying path while the tab sheet is inverted;

a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without the tab sheet being inverted;

a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-up state;

a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-down state; and

a control device responsive to selection of said first sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the normal order is set or said second sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the reverse order is set, for inhibiting selection of discharge devices other than said first sheet discharge device.

10. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus capable of sequentially feeding tab sheets of a tab sheet bundle in a normal order or a reverse order, comprising:

a first sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to an image transfer position via a first conveying path while the tab sheet is inverted;

a second sheet feed device that feeds each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle to the image transfer position via a second conveying path without the tab sheet being inverted;

a first sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-up state;

a second sheet discharge device that discharges each of the tab sheets of the tab sheet bundle in a face-down state; and

a control device responsive to selection of said first sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the reverse order is set or said second sheet feed device in which the tab sheet bundle in the normal order is set, for inhibiting selection of discharge devices other than said second sheet discharge device.